

Game Theory

The Greening Wars Book III

	a	b
A	0, 0	2, -2
B	2, -2	-1, -1

"Well!"

thought Alice to herself, "after such a fall as this,

I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs!"

– *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Fair division with three or more players is considerably more complex than the two player case.

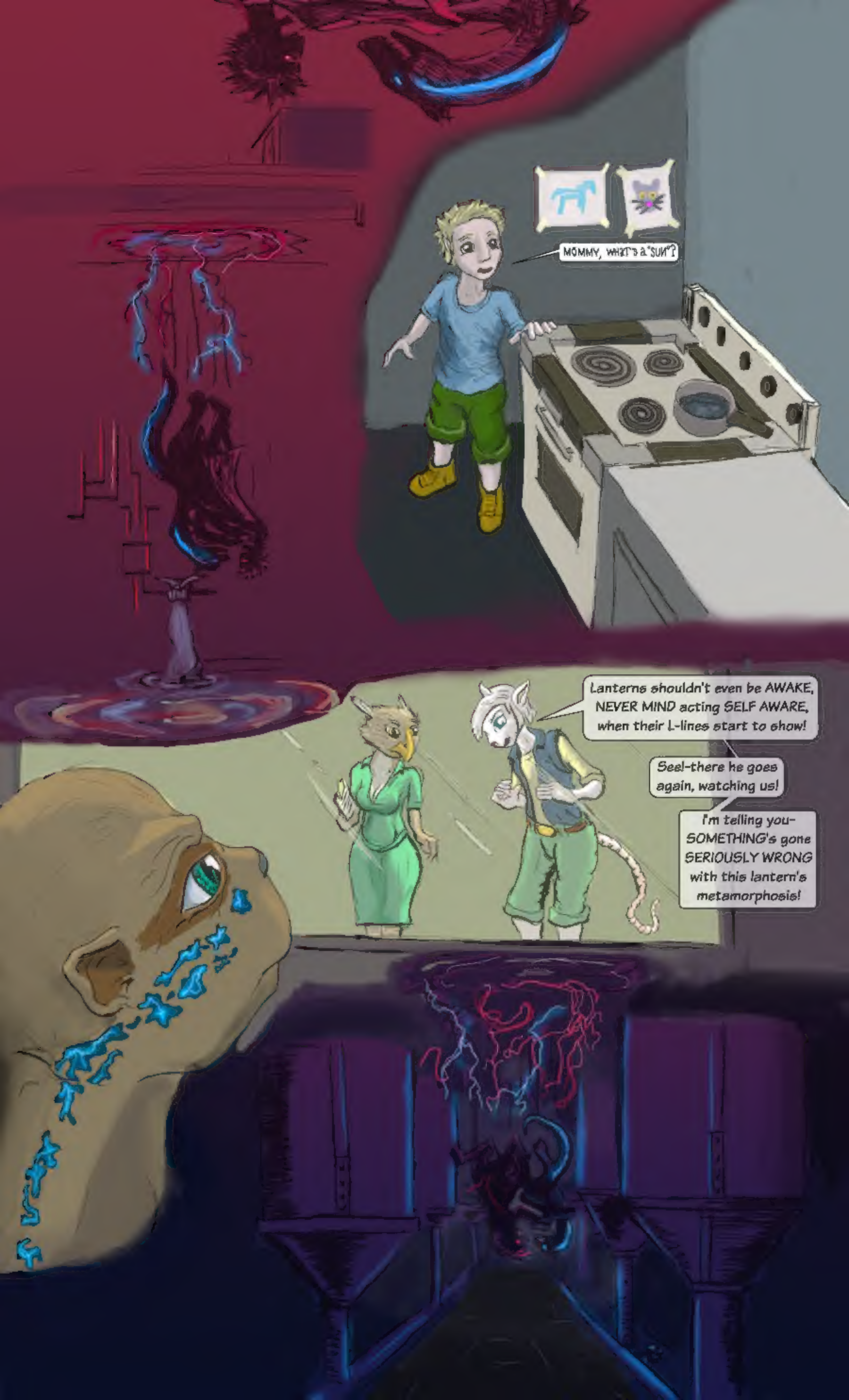
[...]

Equitability and envy-freeness can be incompatible for 3 or more players

– Selected excerpts from Wikipedia article for Game Theory's "Cake-Cutting Problem"

Life ALWAYS finds a way.

– *Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton

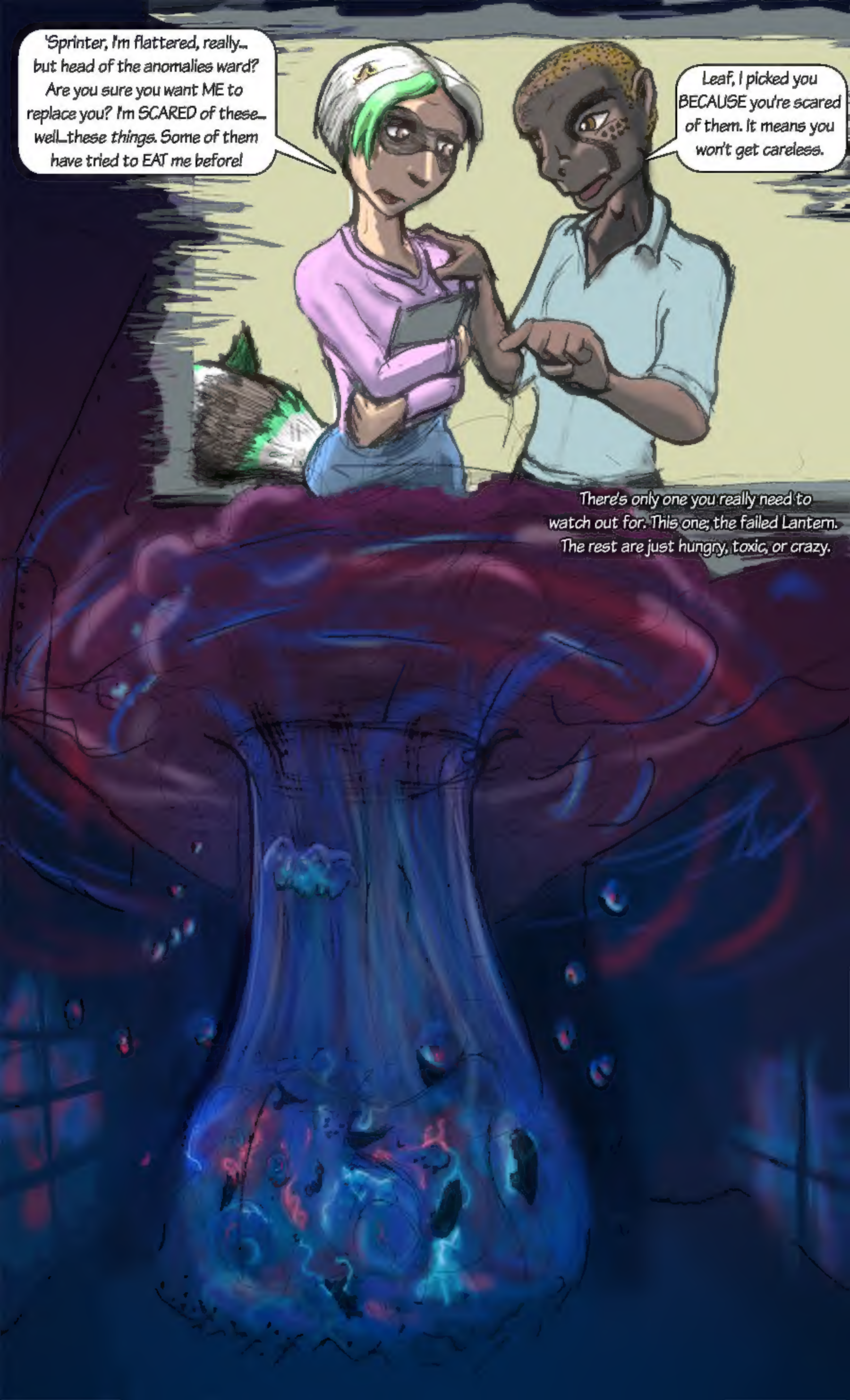


MOMMY, WHAT'S A "SUN"?

Lanterns shouldn't even be AWAKE, NEVER MIND acting SELF AWARE, when their L-lines start to show!

Seel-there he goes again, watching us!

I'm telling you- SOMETHING's gone SERIOUSLY WRONG with this lantern's metamorphosis!



'Sprinter, I'm flattered, really...
but head of the anomalies ward?
Are you sure you want ME to
replace you? I'm SCARED of these...
well...these things. Some of them
have tried to EAT me before!

Leaf, I picked you
BECAUSE you're scared
of them. It means you
won't get careless.

There's only one you really need to
watch out for. This one; the failed Lantern.
The rest are just hungry, toxic, or crazy.

Oh, T'sati... how can
I explain this to you...?
The sun... it's like a big, hot
ball, way up in the sky...
Does that make more sense?
What's a 'sky'?
SIGH





Uh...Malcom...?
EXPLAIN PLEASE!

a-a-Arc...?



CHAPTER 1: Phasma in Machina

Has anyone seen Nightshade this morning?
After an all-night patrol she normally just crashes,
but she's not in her bed...I'm kind of worried.

She's probably in the garage with her creepy friends.
I'm not going in there to check, either.

Yeah, she just lets the Seekers run loose when
they're awake-I've got the chipped scales to prove it.
I think that bond they have makes her a little loopy
when they aren't on ice.



So your response to a potentially missing crew member is to ignore the problem and make breakfast?

Have I ever mentioned that I frequently want to throttle the both of you?

UM-HMM

Said it twice yesterday, actually.

Has anyone seen Nigh-

Hey! Since when do we have bacon?
And where'd ya find the toaster?

Sorry Nightshade,
but I'm not missing
this- you snooze
you loose.



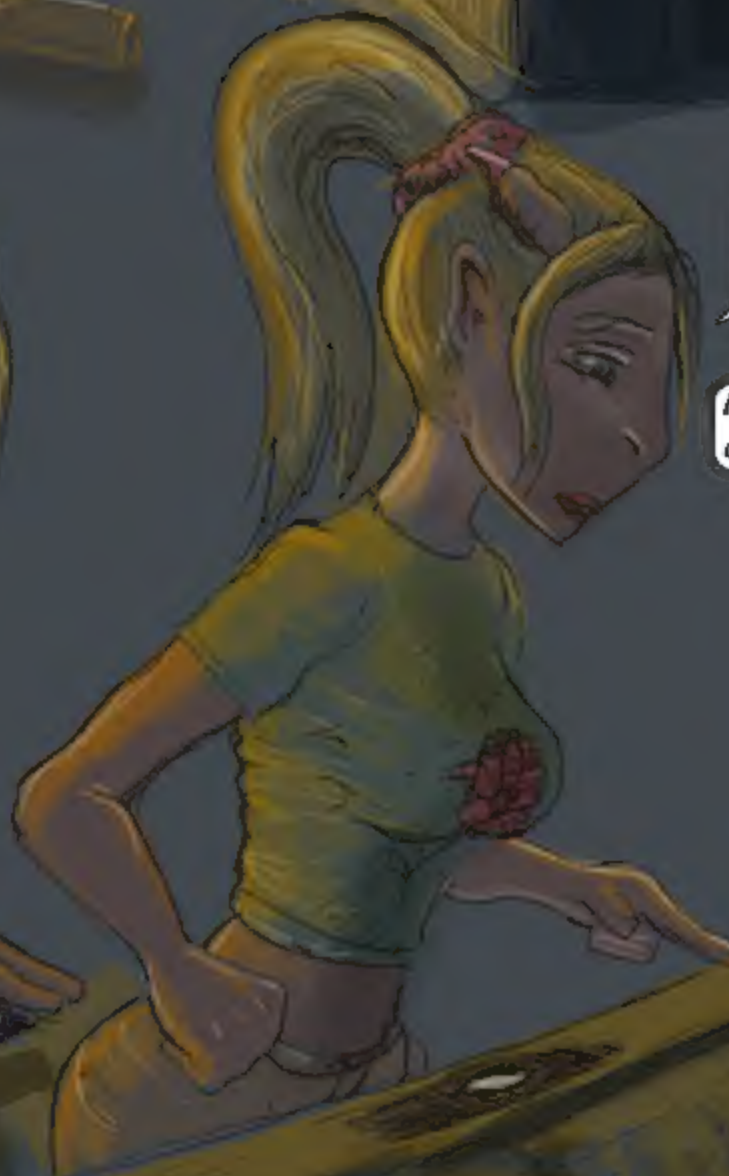


"It'll be easy" they said.
"For six months, you just have to be their keeper:
Relay orders, organize the labor, and keep them on task.
At the end you'll have earned full initiate status,
-a full year ahead of schedule!"

For six months of cleaning up after a pair of
dunken idiot savants while they attempt to refurbish
the freaking "Hotel California" they should be putting
me on the council!

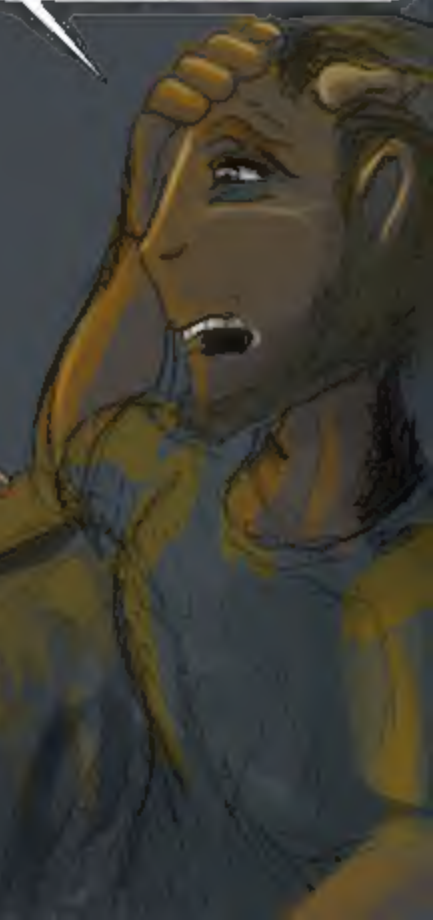


What happened to the cou-
Never mind. I don't want to know.



Oh good, you're alive.
Nightshade's missing.

Maybe she hitched a ride
on the truck that hit me?



AAAAHHHGG!

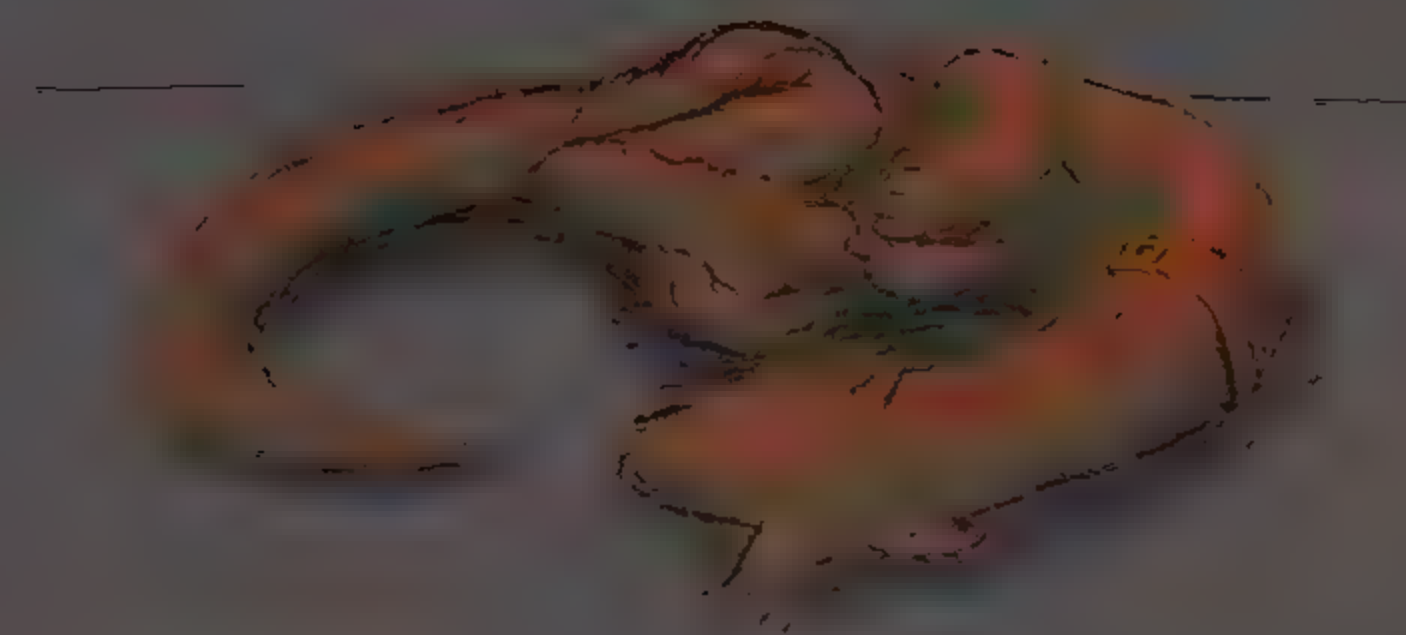


ACK!

Can it with the screaming, Capri.
And while you're at it,
make that thing stop flashing..

INTRUDER
ALERT

IN. R. DEK
ALERT



qVolt...

{qVolt. Wake up.}

¡¡¡Viva METR!!!
Mundial Español
Televisión Radiodifusión

Wakey-Wakey, qVolt.

Earth to q-volt...

Hey! Dormouse!

POK

Tm-h

Go'way.
Sleeping.

Stone...?

Are you ok?

Yeah, I'm good...

Does anyone
else hear
mariachi music?

qVolt, do you know
anything about this
"intruder alert?"

Humph. Fine.
If then: {go-way}:


Yes.
Query?

Shouldn't there, um,
be like sirens going off
and stuff?

ManderSaid:
"WILL YOU PLEASE FIND A WAY TO
DISABLE THESE (U) ~~ARE~~ SIRENS?
THEY ARE! DRIVING! ME! INSANE!"

SIREN-SIRE

So did.



I DIDN'T MEAN
PERMENANTLY!

Do you have to take **EVERYTHING** literally?

Yes.

Want siren onback turned?

NO!

Leave it offturned!

Please. No siren...

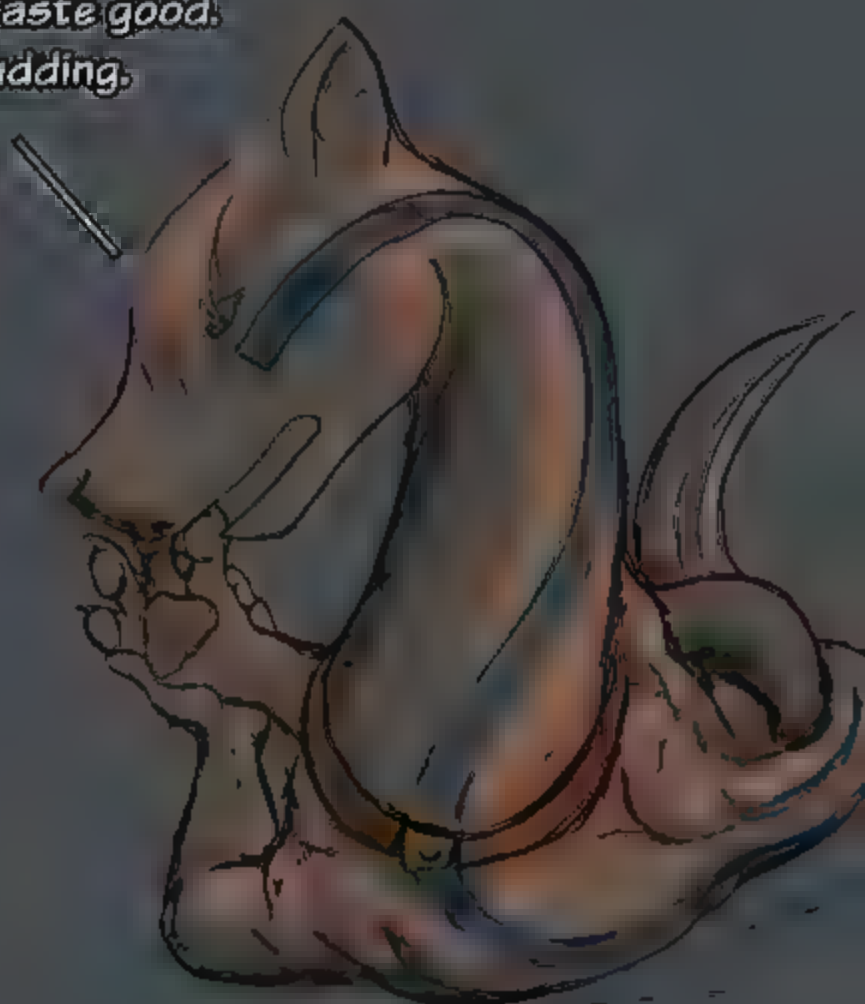
But, anyway...
Is there some *reason*
for the red alert you'd
like to share with the
rest of the class?

BOZZ.
That why.



Wait, buzz like the Tokyo thingy surging again?

No. Buzz taste bad.
Tokamak taste good.
Like pudding.



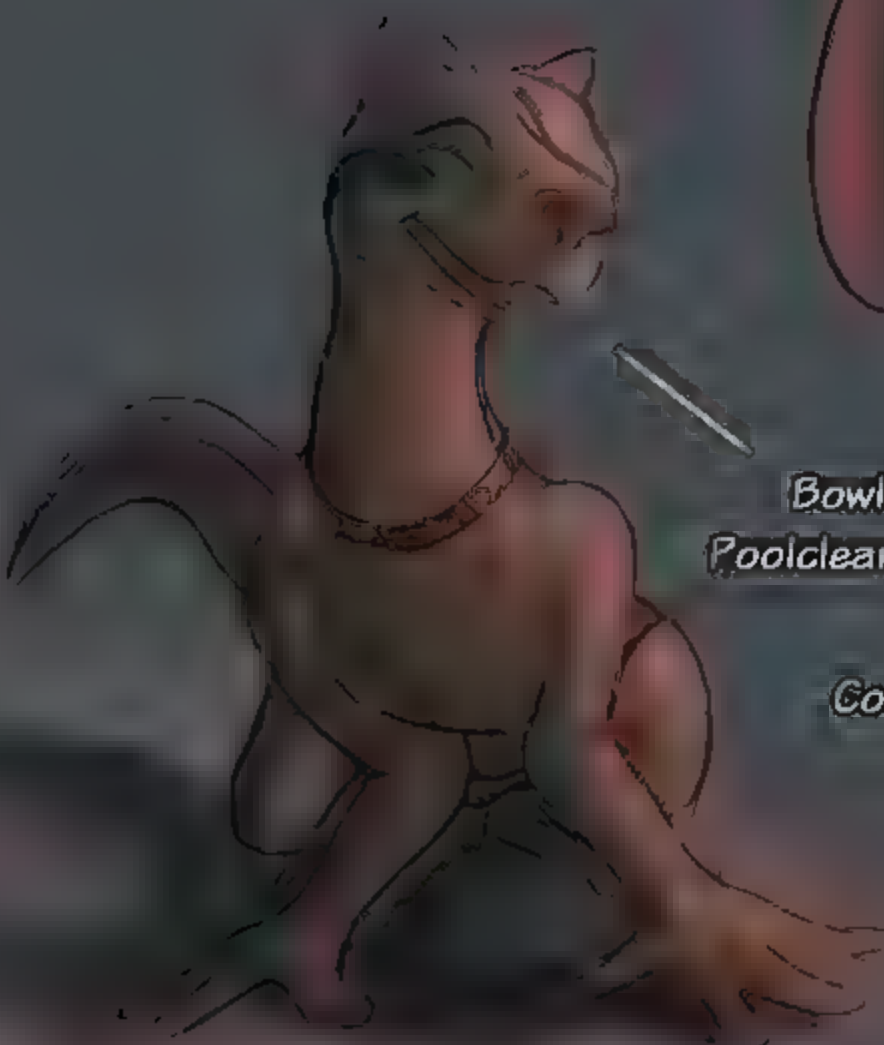
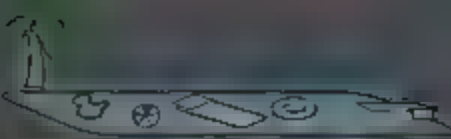
OOH! =D
Can have pudding?

I WILL GET YOU AN ENTIRE

SWIMMING POOL

FULL OF PUDDING IF YOU WILL PLEASE JUST

FOCUS AND GIVE ME ANSWERS THAT MAKE SENSE!!



BowlFine.
Poolclean.notyet.

Conversation.setpriority="high";

Memory error.
PleaseCan resubmit:
Conversation.topic?





Stone, seriously.

Quit trying to talk to fuzzbrain like a person.

No mente aqui.

9Volt: Display event logs related
to triggering intruder alert.

Security Event Log

Multiple anomalies detected

18:00 Loading Bay door lock malfunction-bay door open

18:01 Loading Bay door closed

18:42 Loading Bay door lock malfunction-bay door open

18:47 Loading Bay door closed

01:11 Security Lock Override Engaged at location
Lv B1 Stairwell Access Door

01:13 New mainframe terminal site established
physical port location not pointer

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B1

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B5

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B6

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B7

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B9

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B14

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B15

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B16

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B17

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B18

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B19

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B20

01:17 Electrical Systems Disruption L B22

Security Event log

!Multiple Anomalies detected:

18:00 !Loading Bay door lock-malfunction-bay door open.
18:01 Loading Bay door closed.
23:42 !Loading Bay door lock-malfunction-bay door open.
23:47 Loading Bay door closed.
01:11 !Security Lock Override Engaged at location:
-Lvl B1, Stairwell access Door
03:23 New mainframe terminal site established.
Physical port location:-null pointer-
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B3
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B5
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B6
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B7
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B9
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B17
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B18
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B19
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B20
03:37 Electrical Systems Disruption-Lvl B22

So ghosts use doors now do they? And apparently they can hack, too.
4volt, I think you just found our sabatour. Good boy, you get a treat.



What exactly were they trying to do, anyway?
Fry the power system?

Thats a big step up from trashing the work room... they're getting nuclear.

Well, if they want to raise the stakes, two can play that game.
Hey, Stone... that courier that came by the other day?
Do remember where we stashed the stuff he delivered to us?
Cause I think I just found the perfect way to run that field test.

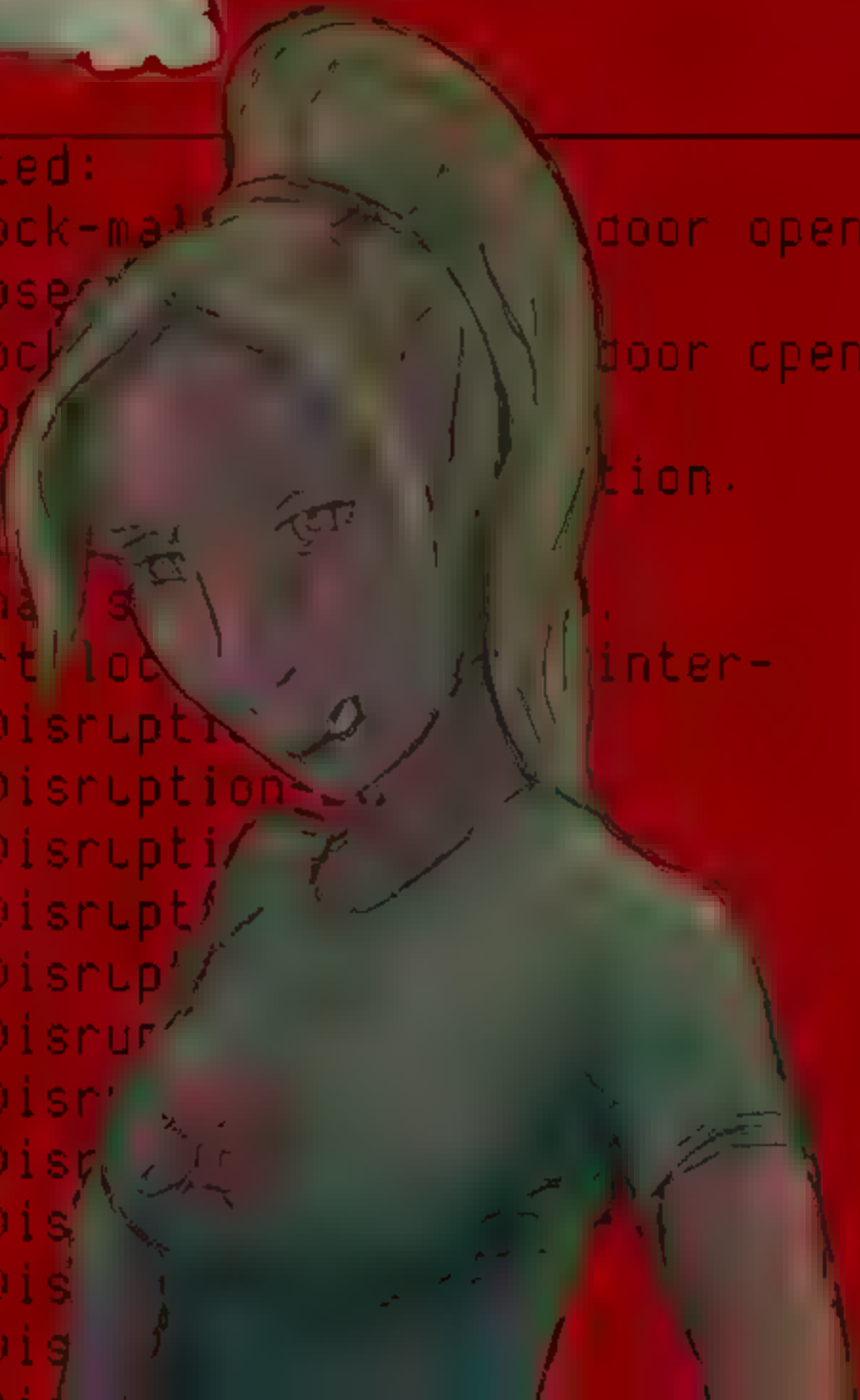
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Ended our watch early, did we, Nightshade?
While I've been worried sick, you've been all,
"COME ON, BOYS, LETS GO HAVE A TEA PARTY, ~~WHY NOT?~~ KOW- SHE'S TOO STUPID!"
And on top of that, you decide to SLEEP IN?

If you think I'm going to go easy on you just 'cause you're the only one here worth talking to, just wait till I get to the loading bay.
We'll have a little "girl-talk", alright...

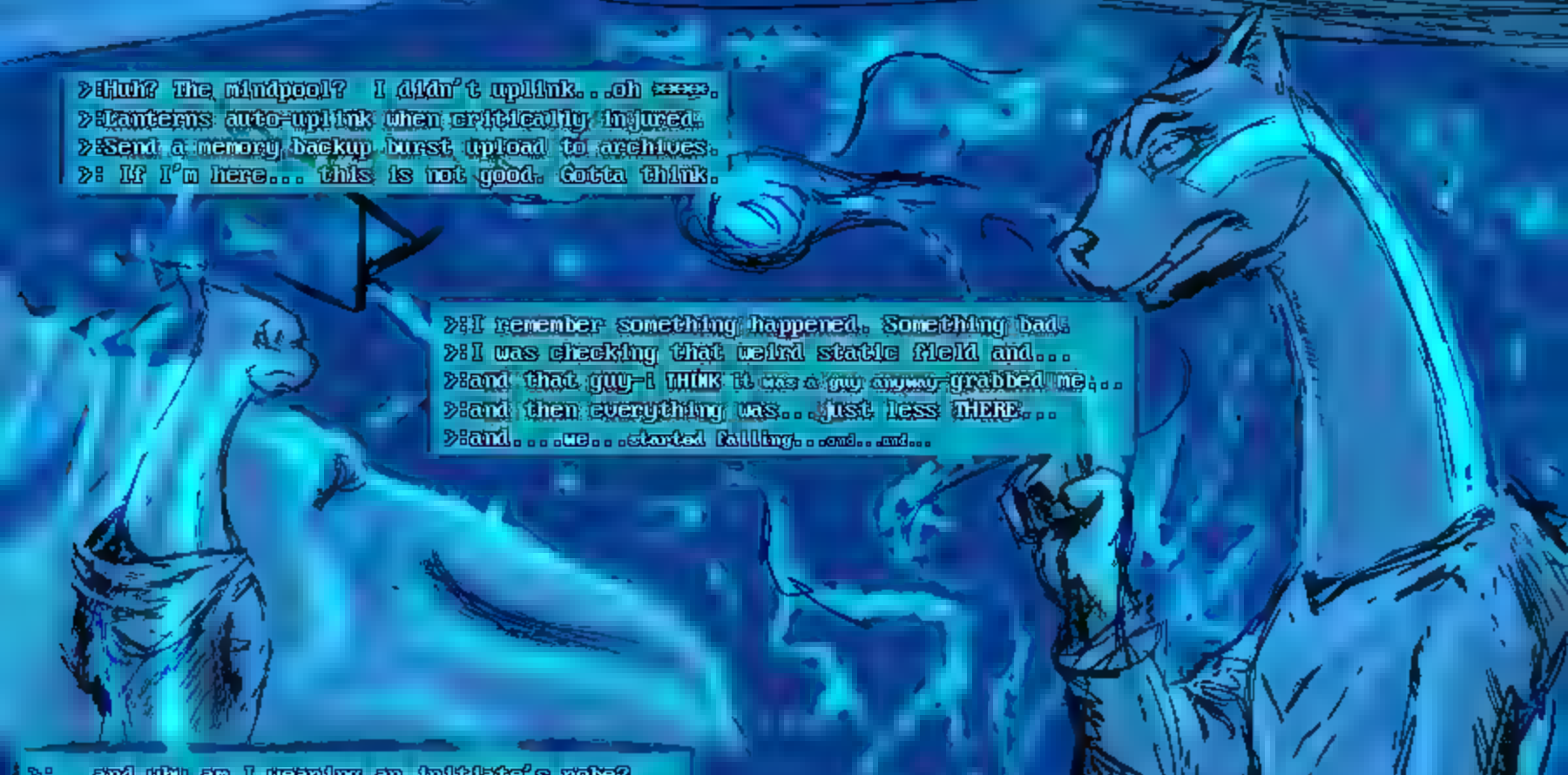






>:Ugh...Where am I?

>Huh? The mindpool? I didn't uplink...oh ****.
>Antennas auto-uplink when critically injured.
>Send a memory backup burst upload to archives.
>: If I'm here... this is not good. Gotta think.



>:I remember something happened. Something bad.
>:I was checking that weird static field and...
>and that guy-I THINK it was a guy anyway-grabbed me...
>and then everything was...just less THERE...
>and...we...started falling...and...and...

>:...and why am I wearing an initiate's robe?
>Some kind of default in the interface?
>:I feel like an idiot wearing this stupid thing.

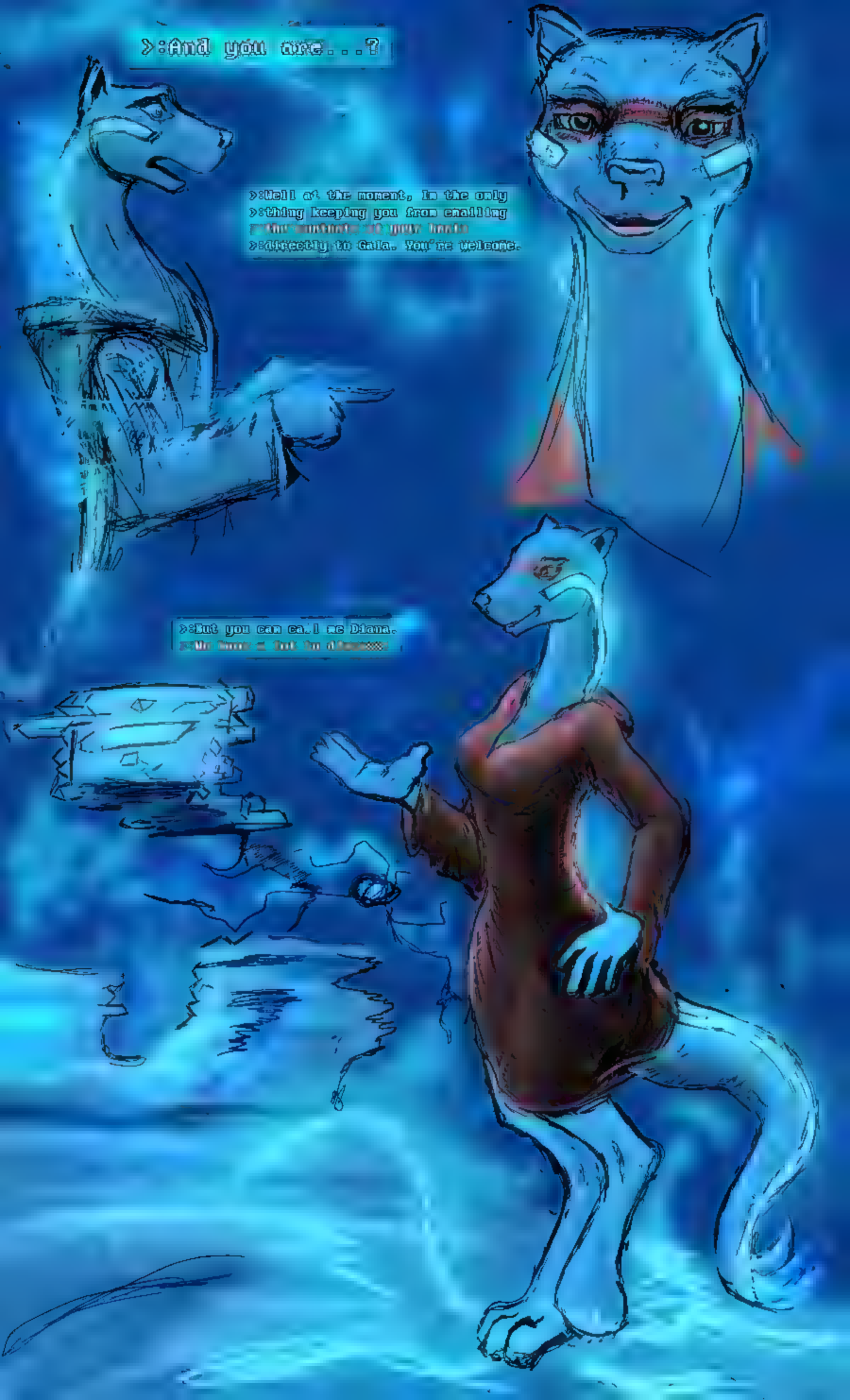


>:I think you look rather dashing in it, personally.

>:And you are...?

>:Well at the moment, in the only
>:thing keeping you from enailing
~~your hands at your hands~~
>:directly to Gaea. You're welcome.

>:But you can call me Diana.
~~>:No more at that distance~~



> You're really hard to track down, you know that?
> I've been hunting for you for a LONG time.
> And then out of the blue, you start broadcasting
like you're trying to blow your charge or something!
> AND from the middle of the glow, of all places!
> You're either real brave, real crazy, or real dumb

>:Woah, woah, woah! Hold on a sec! Okay,uh, Diana, was it?
>:You're projecting as a lantern, but I've searched the databases.
>:I'm the only one on record to ever survive with mind intact.
>:Lets start over, please. Starting with WHAT you are? Please

>: I already told you, I'm whats keeping you
inside that pretty little head of yours, silly!;3
>:but since you asked nicely...hmm...for now..
lets say I'm a figment of Gala's Imagagination

Meanwhile...

Malcom. Stop. Before you make my headache worse.

Without using the phrases: "working theory", "isn't possible", "not my specialty", "Heisenberg Principal", "electroweak force", "quantum tunneling" or "localized higgs field manipulation"; explain what that thing was and where it and the rat went.



CHAPTER 2

Down.

Where'd they go?

In a word...



As for explanations...

Maybe with a team of physicists,
a lot of expensive equipment, and
a few years we could figure it out.

Maybe.



I can make guesses but not much more. Didn't seem to mix well with Arc.

That means it's probably at least partly electromagnetic in nature.

There's no telling what sort of projects were going on down here, but like Arc said:

"Somebody did something extremely rude to several important laws of physics over here."

I think something might have stopped them at basement level 22.

That was the last system disruption report, anyway, if they didn't just run out of floors.

And falling that far. No telling what kind of a state they're in.

Depends a lot on how much resistance they had passing through the floors, I guess.

Might still be alive down there. Maybe. Not, not a 0% chance.

Okay crew. Plan:

Malcom: Pull yourself together. No freaking.
See what you can dig up in the mainframe
about what projects those science fair all-stars
were working on down here during WWII.
Don't want any MORE surprises in this place.

Okay.

Hatchet: keep him from going catatonic; he's having a moment.
That's priority, we can't afford to loose both our specialists.
At least he's a quiet freaker, unlike certain others in this unit...sigh.
Keep me posted on the Greening crew as much as you can, too.
They're bound to notice us sooner or later.

NOD

Huh?
"While you're gone?"
Where are you going?

Basement level 22, obviously.
We have a squad member down.
We are going to get him back.
And by we, I mean me and you.
Problem?

ME? Why ME?

You don't even LIKE me!



Look, Fish, if there was ANYONE else..
but I need backup, and you're what I've got.

Besides-
You're supposed to be some sort
of prototype shock trooper, right?
Time we tested that theory.

FAILED
prototype!
As in:
DID NOT
WORK!

Cassie... you need to face reality.
The greening didn't get exactly what they wanted,
so they called you a failed experiment.

But You can't keep thinking of yourself as the
same petite nerdette who joined the Greening...

...no matter how badly you
want to pretend you are,
you aren't her anymore.

NIGHTSHADE!

YOU BETTER HAVE A REALLY GOOD
EXPLANATI-



Ow. Ow. Ow.
Hey Mander! Got the most
normal-smelling nest I could
find in the area. Should work okay.
They-ow-seem pretty healthy to me.



If you need anything else,
I'll be tracking down the
first aid kit in the hopes
that there's something
for hornet stings...



Yawn... Hi, Capri.

Shhh... don't wake the babies, they had a hard night..
We found these funny-looking green people out in the woods
They shot at us when we tried to kill 'em. Jerks.

Then I got held hostage by some old dude with a machete,
They put us in here, and we went nighty-night..

-Ya know, these frangs we add to the SO,
to keep the boys calm are REALLY good stuff.



Awww...you put nail polish on your horns!
That's-a-DORE-able!



Bug
Hae-hae!

Yeah. Bug.
Fascinating.

Come on, lets get you to the infirmary.
Maybe once we get you sobered up, we'll get something
better than "little green men did it" out of you.
I'd say you were nuts if your boys didn't look like swiss cheese.



Now if that's that door we just went through,
no wait, that can't be right. Blueprints.

Ummm...

Question?

Are we lost?


NO. WE ARE NOT LOST.

I am simply uncertain of our
location or where to go next.

Hey fi-uh- Cassie...

does this symbol-thingy look more
like a door, or an air duct to you?

It kind of looks like
two bears high-fiving.



Okay, so if the bears thingy is a phone line hub,
and the upside down chair is a trash chute.

...and then we take a left at this duck thing, whatever that is,
and we should be at the next stairwell.

I smell bananas.
Or maybe its pears. Weird.

Fish, there is no such thing as
"weird" for us anymore,
especially in this place



Kyrat?

Sigh
Yeah?

I don't get it.
You told me you didn't like people like us.
Gene mixers.



Why go to so much trouble to save someone
you don't even ca-

You stop right there.



I may not like freaks in general.
I may have a score to settle with the Greening.
I may have my doubts about you two.
And I may not like you as a person.



But don't you ever suggest that I don't care
about someone who's under my command.
You and the fuzzy nerd are members my unit.
I care, no matter how I feel about what you are.

Ya know, that's kind of a relief.
I was kind of worried that you were going to shoot
me as soon as we were down a few more levels.

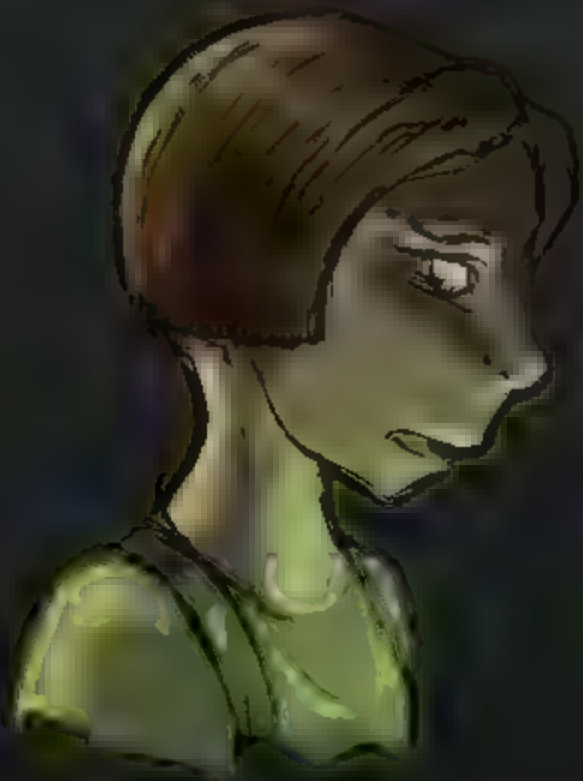
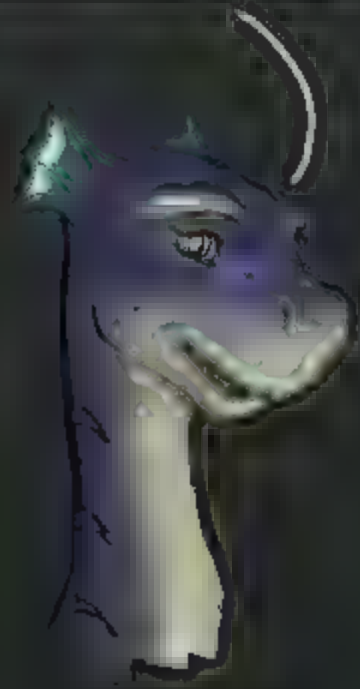
It crossed my mind.
Too much paperwork.



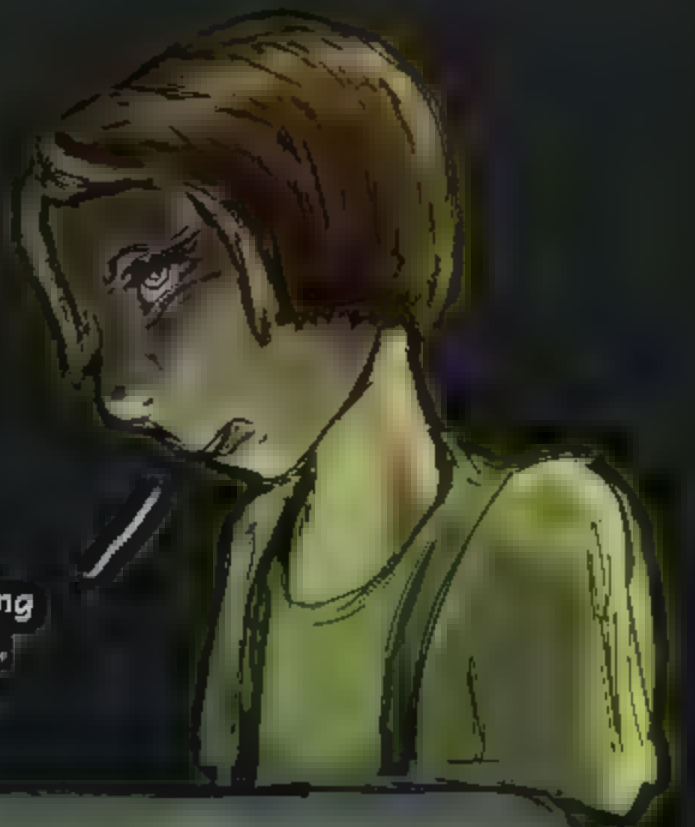
Plus that whole stupid
actually "caring" thing.



That banana smell is getting stronger.



Yeah, I'm getting it too now.
I'm calling Malcom...



For all we know its some ancient tank leaking
experimental banana-flavored neurotoxin.

Establishing Connection...

Yes, Hatchet, I am aware that they are still coming!
But Cassie and Kyra could be in worse trouble!
I'll keep it short, but its necessary!

Hey, Malcolm it smells like bananas or pears
or something down here... is that a bad thing?

SPLOT

Hatchet! PLEASE try to
leave SOME of them intact!
I want to dissect at least
one of them. I need to...
I just need to get more
info about how they did this.

Um... Are you two
okay up there?

We're fine.

You're smelling isopentyl acetate,
Bee attack pheromone. Also in bananas.

Slow down for those of us who don't speak geek!

No time. Do you hear something buzzing?

Not like a bee, but like a chainsaw?

We've been hearing that for a while.

It isn't the ventilation system?

What's going on up there?

And what do bees have to do with anything?

Kyra, with the utmost respect:

SHUT UP AND RUN!
AND KEEP AWAY FROM AIR VENTS!

What *huh* are we *huh* running from?



SQUEEE!


THAT!

-EEEEEP!

IN HERE!



I dropped the flashlight...sorry.

Its fine. Priorities and all that 
Maybe we can get it back.

Where's the door...

WAH!

TRIP

THUD

OWCH!

You stepped on my tail!
That HURTS you know!

Well, YOU shouldn't have put it under MY foot!

HUMPH
-POUT-

Heres the door.

Rattle
Rattle

C
r
e
a
k



C
L
O
S
e
-CLICK-

So... now what?

Know how to play gin?

Shuffle

Buzz
Buzz Buzz-Buzz
Buzz



You get a good look?
Rule number one, fish.
Observe your enemy.

THAT'S your plan?
Hope they go away?

One of 'em had three eyes, and the
rest looked about as well put together.
That doesn't exactly scream "durable".

I think if we wait long enough the
👹👹👹👹👹🌸 will just keel over.
So, in the meantime...how about
two-man spades; know that one?

Nope.

Sigh.

So...how'd you end up in the UCM?

Born into it, actually...